Appl. No. 09/812,784
Reply to Office Action of May 5, 2004

Attorney Docket: P66491US0

REMARKS

In this Amendment, Applicant has cancelled Claims 1, 3 – 5 and 7 – 8, without prejudice and disclaimer, and amended Claims 2 and 6. Claims 2 and 6 have been amended to overcome the rejections and further specify the embodiments of the present invention. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been introduced by the amended claims. All claims are now present for examination and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the preceding amendments and the following comments.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102:

Claims 2 and 6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) as allegedly being anticipated by Honda et al. (US 6,493,466), hereinafter Honda.

Applicant traverses the rejection and respectfully submits that the present-claimed invention is not anticipated by the cited reference. At first, Claims 2 and 6 have been amended to further specify the embodiments of the present invention include "a motion amount detector to obtain motion activity from information on activity carried by the incoming first moving-picture bitstream." The amendment is suported by the disclosure on page 15, lines 4 – 6 of the specification.

The embodiments of the present invention as defined in Claim 2 and 6 are different to the disclosure in Honda. Honga's image data compression apparatus is an encoder to encode input image data with frame-rate control. To the contrary, the embodiments of the present invention as claimed offer bitstream conversion to convert an incoming moving-picture bitstream at a first code transfer rate to another moving-picture bitstream at a second code transfer rate. In other words, the claimed bitstream conversion controls the picture rate of a moving-picture bitstream sent from an encoder. Specifically, Honda's frame-rate control maintains the frame rate of the image data if

image change is large whereas lowers the frame rate if image change is small by switching compression encoding. Image change is detected from the input image data.

In contrast, it is respectfully submitted that the embodiment of the presently claimed invention as defined is used, for example, as follows:

In a coding apparatus, motion activity is detected from an incoming picture and information on the motion activity is multiplexed with a moving-picture bitstream (encoded moving picture).

When it is required to lower the bit rate while the mulpilexed moving-picture bitstream is being transferred, the multiplex bitstream is supplied to the bitstream conversion apparatus of the present invention as definded, in which the bit rate is lowered by decimating only the second pictures, The second pictures as in the embodiments of the present invention as definded are, for example, B-pictures in MPEG standard, which is different from the first pictures in the embodiments. The first pictures are set at a predetermined interval and used as reference pictures for inter-picture prediction.

The motion acitivity detectd in the claimed bitstream conversion may be multiplexed in the coding apparatus or obtained from information on activity carried by the incoming moving-picture bitstream according to the embodiments of the present invention as defined. Such information originally exists in a bitstream. Thus, the claimed bitstream conversion can be applied to a bitstream sent from a coding apparatus.

Different from Honda's encoder or image data compression apparatus, the embodiment of the present invention as claimed applied bitstream conversion to alerady encoded or compressed bit stream by decimating only the second pictures, as in the embodiment of Claim 2, such as B-pictures in MPEG standard, as discused above, for less effects of decimation to other pictures.

The claimed bitstream conversion offerrs an appropriate or controled bit rate when it is varied during bitream transfer, without notifying an encoder of changes in bit rate. Therefore, the appropriate images are thus obtained at the controlled bit rate based on the motion activity. These features are not disclosed nor taught in Honda.
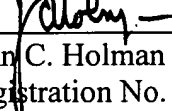
In summary, the newly presented claims are not anticipated by Honda and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) has been overcome. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) is respectfully requested.

Having overcome all outstanding grounds of rejection, the application is now in condition for allowance, and prompt action toward that end is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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